Mohandas K. Gandhi was one of the greatest leaders of the 1900s. He helped free India from British colonial rule without using violence. Gandhi's courage and morals won respect throughout the world. So did the methods of nonviolent resistance he used to gain Indian independence. Today, the people of India consider Gandhi the father of their nation.

Gandhi was born in 1869 in Western India. As a child, Gandhi was rebellious. Once, he stole some jewelry from his brother. But Gandhi had a strong conscience. He confessed to his father. Gandhi expected anger and punishment. Instead, his father cried. Gandhi felt even worse. From then on, he understood the power of nonviolence. He would later write about the story, "Those pearl-drops of love cleansed my heart."

Gandhi studied law in England. Soon after, he went to South Africa to do some legal work. It
was there that Gandhi felt the sting of prejudice first-hand. Like India, South Africa was also a
British colony. Gandhi had been asked to give up his seat on a train by a European person.
When Gandhi refused, he was arrested by British police and badly beaten. He did not fight
back with fists or weapons. Instead, he vowed to work peacefully to change unjust laws that
didn't protect a person's rights.

In 1914, Gandhi returned to India. British laws there were unjust, placing many Indians at an
economic disadvantage. For example, by law Indians could only buy goods made in British
factories. To protest this system, Gandhi stopped wearing cloth made in Britain. Instead, he
spun his own cloth from Indian cotton. He encouraged others to do the same. The
boycott worked. It hurt British clothing sales in India. It also allowed Indians to sell more of
their own cloth. With more income, they wouldn't be as poor. Gandhi also fought British
injustice by fasting. He would refuse to eat for five or six days. Gandhi's fasts drew public
attention to his cause. Newspapers and the public began to sympathize with Gandhi. They
put pressure on the British government to change its ways.

Gandhi spent seven years in jail because of his political activities. To him, it was honorable to
be jailed for a good cause. He continued his nonviolent protests and disobedience to British
rule. He had faith that truth and nonviolence would win in the end. In 1947, Britain finally
bowed to Gandhi's peaceful pressure. India was finally granted independence. Sadly, Gandhi
was assassinated for his beliefs in 1948. Years later, Martin Luther King, Jr. would use
Gandhi's nonviolent ways to protest injustice in America. Gandhi is remembered to this day as
"Mahatma." The word means "great soul."
conscience  con·science

Definition
noun
1. the sense that helps a person decide what is right and wrong.

   *My conscience will not allow me to lie.*

Advanced Definition
noun
1. the human faculty that enables one to decide between right and wrong conduct, esp. in regard to one’s own actions.

   *His conscience plagued him after he deceived his friend.*

   *Since I did nothing wrong, my conscience is clear.*

2. moral integrity.

   *As a man of conscience, he could not carry out orders that he believed immoral.*

   *Their decision had nothing to do with conscience, but rather with an attempt to save face.*

Spanish cognate

conciencia: The Spanish word conciencia means conscience.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. But Gandhi had a strong **conscience**.

2. "If I were the driver, I would feel guilty forever, and it would always be on my **conscience**," says Destery Lunsford, an eighth grader from Altamont.
peaceful  peace·ful

Definition
adjective
1. quiet; calm.

    The sleeping baby looked peaceful.

2. without war or fighting.

    The two countries enjoyed a peaceful relationship.

Advanced Definition
adjective
1. tranquil; quiet.

    The sleeping baby looked peaceful.

    The terrible wind had died down and all was peaceful again.

2. free from war or hostility.

    The people had only five peaceful years before war broke out again.

Spanish cognate

pacífico: The Spanish word pacífico means peaceful.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. Burmese pythons are in fact quite calm creatures. Unless you attack them, they will remain peaceful.

2. The woods behind Lola's house are peaceful. Just a hundred feet from her house, her brother's noise fades away. There is a little stream just behind her backyard. On weekends, she and her friends make paper boats to race in the stream.

3. Pueblo is a Spanish word that means "town." The Spanish called the Hopi "pueblo people" because they lived together in what amounted to towns. The Hopi have always been a very peaceful people. Their name comes from the term Hopituh Shinumu, which means "The Peaceful People" or "Peaceful Little Ones" in the Hopi language.
1. Gandhi helped free India from the colonial rule of which nation?
   A. America  
   B. Britain  
   C. France  
   D. Spain

2. The passage lists different tactics Gandhi used against the British government. Which of the following tactics did Gandhi NOT use?
   A. non-violent protest  
   B. fasting  
   C. boycotts  
   D. physical assaults

3. Read the following sentences: "In 1947, Britain finally bowed to Gandhi's peaceful pressure. India was finally granted independence."
   Based on the passage, "peaceful pressure" refers to what?
   A. Gandhi's legal work in South Africa  
   B. Gandhi's nonviolent protests and disobedience  
   C. Gandhi's imprisonment  
   D. Gandhi's status as one of the greatest leaders of the 1900s

4. Read the following sentences: "Gandhi's fasts drew public attention to his cause. Newspapers and the public began to sympathize with Gandhi. They put pressure on the British government to change its ways."
   As used in the passage, what does the word "sympathize" most nearly mean?
   A. support  
   B. attack  
   C. ignore  
   D. encourage
5. What is this passage mainly about?
   A. Gandhi’s childhood and inspirations
   B. Gandhi’s nonviolent resistance and disobedience
   C. Gandhi’s influence on political leaders
   D. British colonial rule in India

6. What actions did Gandhi take against the law which allowed Indians to only buy goods made in British factories?

7. Explain why the people of India might consider Gandhi the father of their nation. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

8. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

   __________ the British police arrested and badly beat Gandhi, he did not fight back with fists or weapons. Instead, he vowed to work peacefully to change unjust laws.
   A. Although
   B. Because
   C. Since
   D. However